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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

July 18, 2018

Commissioner Jeffrey A. Meyers
New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

Dear Commissioner Meyers:

Rivier University enthusiastically supports DHH's efforts to secure Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) funding for the State Opioid Response (SOR) Grant.

Rivier firmly believes and numerous studies have demonstrated that a well-prepared clinical workforce in nursing, counseling, and public health directly correlates to successful outcomes of recovery for those receiving treatment for substance use disorders.

Rivier urges that SAMHSA funding not only support students who are pursuing education but also incentivize practitioners to complete the certification in Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). This certification is designed to assist family nurse practitioners, psychiatric nurse practitioners, physician assistants and medical doctors in increasing access to MAT.

Commissioner Meyers, through the Rivier Center for Behavioral Health Professions and Workforce Development the University is committed to a comprehensive and cooperative approach that begins with education and training to meet the needs of medical and behavioral health treatment.

I have attached information on Rivier's programs in counseling, school psychology, nursing and public health, in addition to recommendations for increasing nursing capacity and retention in New Hampshire.

There is no more critical need within the state than to develop the behavioral health workforce. I urge you to allocate funding that will support individuals currently working in these field to pursue advanced degrees with the intent of mitigating the tragedy of substance use disorder within our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Paula Marie Buley, IHM".

Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM
President

The Center FOR

Behavioral Health Professions

AND WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT AT | **Rivier University**



In New Hampshire and throughout New England, there is a significant shortage in trained behavioral health professionals. In many medically underserved communities (MUCs), the need is dire and the demand for these professionals is growing. The situation calls for a comprehensive, cooperative approach that begins with education and training to meet the needs of medical and behavioral health treatment providers.

- Sister Paula Marie Buley, IHM, President, Rivier University

The Center for Behavioral Health Professions and Workforce Development at Rivier University is an initiative in response to the increasing demand for professionals in fields of behavioral health and substance use disorder. The goal of The Center is to partner with the region's healthcare providers in ensuring an adequately trained workforce ready to meet the demands of regional healthcare, schools and governmental initiatives.

Encompassing the University's extensive graduate programs in Counseling and School Psychology, Nursing and Health Professions and an MBA in Healthcare Administration, The Center seeks to create partnerships and pathways to professional degrees and licensure requirements. The Center will serve as a hub for behavioral health issues and highlight Rivier's unique ability to expand the workforce pipeline through the delivery of academic programs.

Pathways to Professional Degrees and Licensure Requirements

With a broad array of graduate programs in nursing and the health professions, Rivier University is uniquely positioned to serve as a primary conduit for behavioral health workforce development in the region.

Counseling and School Psychology

Rivier University's programs prepare professionals for careers as certified or licensed practitioners employed in clinical or educational settings.

Master's Degrees

- M.Ed. School Counseling
- M.A. Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- M.Ed. Education Studies – Counseling and School Psychology concentration

Post-Master's Degrees

- Ed.S. School Psychology
- Ed.S. Counseling

Doctoral Program

- Psy.D. Doctor of Psychology in Counseling and School Psychology

Nursing and Health Professions

Rivier University is a recognized leader in graduate nursing education, having prepared the largest number of nurses in the state of New Hampshire. The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program qualifies graduates to assess, diagnose and treat individual and group mental health needs.

The Master of Public Health programs includes comprehensive study in topics such as global health, healthcare administration, health policy, qualitative-quantitative research, ethics, epidemiology and more.

Master's Degrees

- MSN Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- MPH Master of Public Health–online

Post-Master's Certificate

- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Doctoral Program

- DNP Doctor of Nursing Practice–online

Business

Master's Degree

- MBA Healthcare Administration–online

Behavioral Health and Workforce Development

The Region's Resource for:

- Workshops/Conferences
- Speakers Bureau
on topics such as:
 - The Opioid Crisis
 - Domestic Violence
 - ADHD
 - Bullying
 - Positive Psychology
 - Transgender Identities
 - Substance Use Disorder
 - Psychiatric Mental Health
 - Autism
 - Public Health
 - Integrated Care for Seniors
 - Preventative Healthcare
 - Therapeutic Communication
 - Clinical Mental Health
 - Care for the Caregiver*and more*
- Community partnerships
- Lecture series
- Outreach



Increasing Nursing Capacity and Retention in New Hampshire

Key Questions:

- 1) How do we retain Health Professionals in New Hampshire?
- 2) How can we increase interest and enrollments in Nursing?
- 3) How can we increase those transitioning from clinicians to the next level of practice?

Solution and Incentive Proposals:

- Loan Repayment for postsecondary education, leading to Registered Nurse (RN) licensure, Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate Level Nursing degrees.
This incentive is to remove financial barriers that currently prohibit residents of underserved areas from moving to a higher level of practice.
- Practice Location Incentive for advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) students completing the final practicum in underserved communities in NH, leading to a specialty certification in family practice or psychiatric mental health. APRN Students including Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (Psych NP) who are pre-certification and complete the final practicum will receive a \$5,000 stipend at the successful completion of the practicum. The preceptor (mentor), and the practice, or agency, agreeing to provide the student with the learning experience will also receive \$2,500 to compensate for the student orientation and the temporary decrease in work productivity of the preceptor (total \$10,000).
This incentive is to encourage practice agencies in underserved communities to partner with potential graduating students. Agencies are often hesitant to accept a student as this decreases productivity and patient turn around as preceptors slow down their time and see fewer patients in order to teach.
- Escalating Incentives for RNs and APRNs who fulfill and maintain employment in underserved communities in NH. The incentive is only paid out once, at the end of the two-year period, or the termination of employment, whichever occurs first.
 - Maintain position for 12 months after hire (post-certification); \$5,000 one-time payment.
 - Maintain position for 18 months after hire (post-certification); \$7,500 one-time payment.
 - Maintain position for 24 months after hire (post-certification); \$10,000 one-time payment.*This incentive is to retain RN and APRN practitioners in the state of NH. The average cost to orient a new staff member can be upwards of \$60,000 when orienting a new nurse to a practice.*
- Local Housing Support for APRN students (FNP and Psych NP) to complete the final clinical practicum term in underserved communities in NH. This would include a stipend for temporary lodging for the two days per week for the 14-week semester, transportation fees (28 trips, vehicle mileage), and miscellaneous expenses such as meals. For example:
 - 14 weeks (two nights per week for two clinical days) = 28 days @ \$200 per day = \$5,600
 - 14 weeks (28 trips to and from underserved location) (\$500 gas/\$500 vehicle maintenance) = \$1,000
 - 14 weeks miscellaneous living for two days per week (meals, services, etc.) = \$400
 - Total cost per student: \$7,000.*This incentive is to overcome travel and lodging barriers that prohibit students from completing final nurse practitioner practicums in underserved communities of NH.*
- Deliver Hybrid (Online and On-Site) Education to Underserved Communities, leading to a degree associated with nursing licensure (RN or APRN). These funds would be used to support distance travel and overnight lodging for faculty to travel to underserved locations, physical classroom space, and necessary on-site technologies.
This incentive is to encourage current residents of underserved communities to advance to a higher-level of professional practice. This would be accomplished by providing local intermittent face-to-face classroom education, to supplement the online distance education, fostering a sense of community in the learning environment.